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ABSTRACT

This document presents the college preparatory success rate report for Florida community colleges on first-time-in-college students who took an entry-level placement test (ELT) in reading, writing, and math in fall 1992. It divides the cohort into groups based on gender and age. The entire cohort had a failure rate of 59.44% on at least one section of the ELT. There was an almost direct relationship between failure rate and age. Those students at 16 and under had the lowest failure rate. The highest failure rate was for those students 40 and over. The overall rate of passing the highest level course for the three sections varied considerably. Among groups, there was more variation for reading than for the other two sections. The overall failure rate of females was 61% while that of males was 57%. However, females were more successful in completing college preparatory classes. Students who were successful in their college preparatory courses were tracked an additional two years: 21% of the total cohort had graduated; 63% were retained; and 80% were successful. The highest graduation rate was for those 40 and over. The graduation rate of females was three points higher than that of males. Retention and success rates were also higher. (Includes four tables of these results.) (VWC)

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COLLEGE PREPARATORY SUCCESS RATE REPORT

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Introduction

As part of their assignment from the 1995 Legislature, the staff of the Senate Higher Education Committee developed a report on the progress of remedial students in Florida's community colleges. One of the main data sources for that report was the information contained in Measure 4 of the annual Accountability Report. Measure 4 consists of two parts. The data display for Part 1 "...shows the number of first time in college degree seeking students who took an entrance exam during the Fall of [a given year]. Of those students, the report shows the number and percent who failed some portion of their entrance exam. In addition, the report shows how many of those students enrolled in a college preparatory course (for the area needed), with the number and percentage of those who passed the highest level college preparatory course for that area at that particular community college..[within two years]."

Part 2 follows, for an additional two years, the students from Part 1 who completed the highest level preparatory course and earned a certain number of hours of college credit. The Part 2 data display shows the total cohort, number graduated, number still enrolled who are in good academic standing, number still enrolled who are not in good academic standing, and the number who left in good academic standing. These outcomes are combined into a retention rate which consists of graduates plus enrollees, and a success rate consisting of graduates plus all students in good academic standing.

The normal data displays for this Measure show the cohort as a whole and by ethnicity. Senate staff asked the Division of Community Colleges to reproduce the same charts as those run for the 1996 Accountability Report, but to divide the cohort into groups based on gender and age. The age groups were 16 and under, 17-18, 19-20, 21-22, 23-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, and 40 and above. There was also a summary group of those students 24 and under. The time frame used for these reports was fall 1992 for the entry level test section of Part 1, fall 1992 through summer 1994 for the college preparatory success rates for Part 1, and fall 1992 through winter/spring 1996 for Part 2.

Almost sixty percent of the first-time-in-college students who took an entry level placement test (ELT) in fall 1992 failed at least one out of the three sections. Students unable to pass a specific section of an ELT are required to take college preparatory or remedial courses in that area. They must complete the highest level course prior to being allowed to enroll in college level courses in that area. Therefore, it is in the interest of the Community College System to determine if different segments of the student body have different college preparatory success rates.

Measure 4 Part 1

Initial Failure Rate on the ELT by Age Groups

For the purposes of this discussion, failure rates are based upon the number of persons in a certain group who failed at least one section of an entry level test. Many different entry level tests were used during fall 1992. No attempt has been made to standardize the scores among tests. Rather, each test is scored individually and then the results combined into the overall result for a group.

The entire cohort had a failure rate of 59.44 percent on

at least one section of an ELT. There was an almost direct relationship between failure rate and age. Those students 16 and under had the lowest failure rate at 27.27 percent. The highest failure rate was for those students 40 and over. The overall rate for the summary group of students 24 and under was 55.70 percent. The similarity of this rate and the overall rate is not surprising since the 24 and under group represents 85 percent of the total cohort. Within this large group, the students 16 and under represent only one percent of the total cohort. Those students 17-18 represent forty-seven percent of the total cohort, the largest single group considered. The failure rate for this group was 45 percent. The 19-20 group represents twenty-six percent of the total cohort and had a failure rate of 68 percent. As the age of the group increased, the percent of the total cohort represented by that group generally declined with those 21-22 representing only seven percent of the total cohort and those 23-24 only four percent. The failure rate for both these groups was 74 percent. The 25-29 group had a failure rate of 80 percent. This age group represented six percent of the total cohort. The 30-34 group had a failure rate of 81 percent and represented four percent of the total cohort. The failure rate for 35-39 was the same at 81 percent. They comprised only slightly over two percent of the total FTIC cohort. The final group of 40 and over had a similar rate of 82 percent and made up the remaining three percent of the total cohort.

Passing Rates in College Preparatory Courses by Age

The overall rate of passing the highest level course for the three sections varied considerably. Reading and writing were practically the same at 61 and 62 percent respectively; however, mathematics was only 42 percent. The 16 and under group had the lowest passing percentage for both writing and

math but these numbers were based on only 13 students in writing and 27 in math. Therefore, they were not considered reliable enough to use in the following discussion.

Among groups, there was more variation for reading than for the other two sections. Reading passing rates ranged from a low of 51 percent for those students 21-22 to 71 percent for those 40 and over. Writing passing rates ranged from a low of 52 percent for those 21-22 to a high of 69 percent for the 17-18 group. Mathematics had almost the same passing rate range as reading with a high of 54 percent for the 30-34 group and a low of 35 percent for those 19-20.

Initial Failure Rate of ELT by Gender

The overall failure rate for females was 61 percent while that of males was 57 percent. The total cohort was 56 percent female and 44 percent male.

Passing Rate of college Preparatory Courses by Gender

Although females failed sections of the ELT at a higher rate than males, they were more successful in completing college preparatory classes. In reading, 64 percent of the females passed the highest level preparatory course, while only 56 percent of males did the same. Writing had a slightly wider range with 66 percent of females passing the highest level course and 57 percent of males passing. Mathematics had the narrowest range for gender in contrast to the wide range for age. For this section, 44 percent of females completed the highest level course compared to only 38 percent of males.

Measure 4 Part 2

Graduation, Success and Retention Rates by Age Group

As mentioned above, the students who were successful in their college preparatory courses were then tracked an additional two years. At the end of this period, 21 percent of the total cohort had graduated, 63 percent were retained and 80 percent were successful. (See accompanying tables for full definitions of these terms as well as cohort criteria.) The 24 and under group had very similar rates of 20 percent for graduation, 63 percent for retention and 77 percent for success.

Although the 16 and under age group is included in the accompanying tables, the percents are based upon only nine students and therefore will not be considered in the following discussion. The highest graduation rate was for those 40 and over at 28 percent. Next highest graduation rate was for those students 35-39 at 26 percent. Then came the 23-24 age group at 24 percent. Both the 21-22 and 25-29 age groups were at 23 percent, the 17-18 group was at 22 percent, the 30-34 group was at 21 percent and the 19-20 group was the lowest at 16 percent. Thus the entire range of graduation rates was from 16 to 28 percent.

Retention rates were all in the sixties except for the 23-24 group at 59 percent. The retention rate is the sum of the percent graduated and percent still enrolled. The highest rate was for the 35-39 group at 68 percent.

The final rate discussed in this analysis is success. The success rate is the sum of the percent graduated, percent enrolled in good standing and percent left in good standing. The range for this rate was from a low of 76 percent for the 19-20 group to a high of 96 percent for those 30-34.

Graduation, Success and Retention Rates by Gender

The graduation rate for females was three points higher than that of males - 22 percent compared to 19 percent. Retention and success rates were also higher. The female retention rate was 64 percent while the male rate was 62 percent. Females had a success rate of 82 percent with the male rate standing at 77 percent.

Conclusion

Based upon the information presented in these tables, there appears to be more difference among age groups than between the genders. While the older age groups failed at least one section of an ELT more often than those 24 or under, they completed the highest level college preparatory courses at a higher rate than the younger students for both reading and mathematics. Females failed the ELT more often than males, but remediated at a higher level for all three sections.

Success in remediation appears to track into success in graduation. The older age groups had higher graduation rates than did the 24 and under, but the 30-34 group was only slightly higher. Except for the 25-29 retention rate, the older groups also had higher retention and success rates. The drop in graduation rate for 19-20 year olds compared to the other 24 and under sub-groups suggest the need for additional study for that group. Females were consistently higher than males in graduation, retention and success rates.

When the students in the 24 and under group are split into even finer age ranges, it becomes apparent that being out of high school for even one year impacts the ability to pass the placement test. The overall failure rate increased more than twenty points between those students 17-18 and those 19-20.

Further study needs to be done before a reason for this sharp increase can be determined.

The mathematics section of the ELT continues to be the hardest area to successfully remediate for all age groups and both genders.

Detailed college level information is attached.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Patricia Windham or Ms. Margaret Wingate at the Division of Community Colleges, (904) 488-0555, ext. 172 or 155 respectively.

Table 1
Measure 4 Part 1
Age

Group	Failed ELT	Passed Reading	Passed Writing	Passed Math
16 and under	27.27	60.00	38.46	33.33
17-18	45.45	67.52	69.14	43.55
19-20	67.74	53.76	57.77	34.60
21-22	73.83	51.42	52.20	37.07
23-24	74.36	58.46	64.36	45.73
24 and under	55.70	59.95	62.27	39.49
25-29	80.03	67.38	61.09	45.64
30-34	81.09	64.77	59.46	53.95
35-39	80.71	68.38	60.59	50.44
40 +	82.20	71.43	55.49	49.90
Total	59.44	60.75	61.91	41.63

Table 2
Measure 4 Part 1
Gender

Group	Failed ELT	Passed Reading	Passed Writing	Passed Math
Female	61.07	64.25	66.46	43.95
Male	57.38	55.78	57.09	38.24
Total	59.44	60.75	61.91	41.63

Table 4
Measure 4 Part 2
Gender

Group	Graduated	Retention	Success
Female	22.00	64.37	81.55
Male	18.86	61.53	77.15
Total	20.77	63.26	79.83

Table 3
Measure 4 Part 2
Age

Group	Graduated	Retention	Success
16 and under	22.22	55.56	88.89
17-18	21.66	63.79	76.34
19-20	15.95	63.42	75.50
21-22	23.02	60.79	81.29
23-24	23.62	58.79	82.91
24 and under	20.05	63.18	76.79
25-29	23.27	61.32	92.77
30-34	20.92	66.11	95.82
35-39	25.53	68.09	93.62
40 +	27.62	60.77	91.16
Total	20.77	63.26	79.83